

system more. What are his priorities? Secretary Denis McDonough was supposed to fix the VA. So what is his first major action? Spending millions in diverting resources from our service-connected veterans for nonservice-connected issues. We are bankrupting this Nation chasing the far left progressive wish list.

Again, I will say, as a physician, I am very sympathetic to those that deal with gender dysphoria. I truly do. They face many challenges in life, but cosmetic surgical interventions on the backs of taxpayers is not the answer. Congressional duties are about setting priorities. I ask the Biden administration to reassess their priorities.

HONORING AMELIA BROWN WILSON

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. COMER) for 5 minutes.

Mr. COMER. Madam Speaker, I rise today with a heavy heart to report some very sad news that late last week Kentucky lost a champion, and my congressional office lost a friend and a true warrior with the passing of our beloved field representative, Amelia Brown Wilson, at the young age of 39.

Amelia was born and raised in Monroe County. Like me, she graduated from Monroe County High School and her family and my family go back many generations through Monroe County.

Amelia was someone that I noticed coming up along the public school system as someone who was going to be a future superstar, someone who had class, who had brains, who had a work ethic, who had charisma. And I followed Amelia through her educational career. Amelia's older sister Kelly and I played ball together on the varsity girls' and boys' basketball team of Monroe County. We also went to Western Kentucky University at the same time. Amelia obviously was a little younger.

Amelia went to the University of Kentucky because she was the biggest University of Kentucky fan in the history of Kentucky. She got three degrees from the University of Kentucky. I don't know anyone else that can say that. Amelia got her bachelor's degree, her master's degree, and her Ph.D. all from the University of Kentucky.

Amelia worked right out of the University of Kentucky in the Cooperative Extension Service as the family consumer scientist for Fayette County, which is Lexington, Kentucky, for many years.

Amelia and I always kept in touch, and I knew she was someone with a very bright future.

But while Amelia was at University of Kentucky, she had to receive a liver transplant, and she went through that battle. And for the 20 years after her liver transplant she battled sickness almost daily, but you would never know that because Amelia always had a positive attitude.

Amelia was one of the kindest, most sincere people that you would ever meet. Amelia is someone that everyone who met her loved her, respected her, and was inspired by her, especially if they heard her story.

Amelia was very active in the Kentucky Organ Donor Program. She was a spokesperson for that program and gave speeches around the State and got thousands and thousands of people to sign up on the back of their Kentucky driver's license to be a Kentucky organ donor.

So we will never know how many lives Amelia saved because of her testimony and her story that she would deliver all over Kentucky.

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When I was elected Commissioner of Agriculture in Kentucky, I asked Amelia to come join me at the Department of Agriculture and be my Kentucky Director of Agriculture Tourism. She did that.

Madam Speaker, I had about 275 employees. I can say with confidence that Amelia was the most popular employee in the Kentucky Department of Agriculture. Everybody loved her. And when I got elected to Congress in 2016, Amelia followed me. She was the one employee who I asked to go from the Kentucky Department of Agriculture in Frankfort, Kentucky, with me to create my new field office in Madisonville, Kentucky. Amelia was my field representative for the northwestern part of the First Congressional District of Kentucky.

Madam Speaker, every county judge and every mayor—every elected official—Democrat and Republican—in those counties worked with Amelia, respected Amelia, loved Amelia, and are saddened by the tragic loss of Amelia's life this past week.

I can't say that I have ever met a person who was more sincere and more inspiring than Amelia Wilson. She is a Christian. She is someone who lived a purpose-driven life, and she is someone who we will all greatly miss.

Heaven gained an angel last week with Amelia Brown Wilson. Our prayers go out to her husband, Allen; and her mother, Sarah Faye; and her sisters, Kellie and Keri Jo.

SECOND AMENDMENT IS ESSENTIAL ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Washington (Mr. NEWHOUSE) for 5 minutes.

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Madam Speaker, it is always unconstitutional for government to restrict the rights of law-abiding gun owners, but to do so in the midst of a crisis is especially unconstitutional.

Unfortunately, Governors across the country, including Washington's Jay Inslee, has used the COVID-19 pandemic as justification to disregard the Founders' intent to preserve this right,

excluding those in the firearms industry from essential worker designations.

Denying Federal firearms licensees the ability to operate under essential worker designations not only infringes on the Second Amendment rights of Americans, but also recklessly ties the hands of our law enforcement officers who require access to these tools to ensure the safety of our communities.

The Homeland Security Act of 2002 establishes guidelines for States regarding who should constitute critical infrastructure workers in the event of a natural disaster, an act of terrorism, or other man-made disaster.

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, we have often referred to these individuals as "essential workers." Likewise, the USA Patriot Act defines critical infrastructure as systems and assets so vital to the United States that the incapacity or destruction of such system and assets would have a debilitating impact on security, national economic security, national public health or safety, or any combination of those matters.

The Founders were clear in their drafting of the Second Amendment that the right to bear arms is necessary to the security of a free State. In other words, the Second Amendment is essential to our system of government.

While essential worker designations have been arbitrarily decided and enforced from the outset, forcibly shutting the doors of those who enabled Americans to exercise their Second Amendment rights is obviously motivated by a radical anti-gun agenda.

There is no question that the firearms industry is vital to the security of the American people. The rights of Americans, including the rights to keep and bear arms, are no less essential during a state of emergency. In fact, the right to defend one's self and one's home is most essential during a state of emergency. States of emergency merit our heightened vigilance to protect against unnecessary and unconstitutional government outreach.

In 2020, Americans sought to exercise their Second Amendment right so they could have peace of mind during a turbulent time. As demand rose, Americans faced delays due to the unconstitutional shutdowns imposed by Governors across the country.

That is why I introduced the Second Amendment is Essential Act. This legislation protects law-abiding citizens' ability to exercise their Second Amendment rights and prevents future anti-gun restrictions that restrict lawful access to firearms in times of emergency.

This act will classify, by law, the firearms industry as a critical infrastructure sector and those it employs as essential workers by amending the Homeland Security Act of 2002, and the USA Patriot Act of 2001.

Firearms manufacturers and dealers should not be forcibly closed by government in a time when demand for